

**PAC Region 3 Meeting
Conference Call
Thursday April 11, 2002
7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.**

Attendees: Bob Modaff, St. Joseph County ISD
Betty Dennis, Kalamazoo RESA
Linda Talpos-DeWitt, Barry County ISD
Candy Kniss, Van Buren PAC Chairperson & Region 3 SPAC Rep

Unable to Join Conference Call, however had phone contact with Bob and/or Candy:

Bob Wondergem, Kent ISD PAC Chairperson (Excused, work conflict)
Robin Hodel, Allegan ISD Chairperson (Excused, PAC Mtg Night)
Renee Smith, Calhoun County ISD (Excused, Previous Commitment)
Sherri Notten, Lewis-Cass ISD (PAC No Longer Meeting)
Tom Smith, Berrien County ISD (Removed as PAC Chair by ISD)
Mary Pearson, Oceana County ISD (Unsure if able to make it)

1. Welcome and Introduction

Candy had all in attendance introduce themselves, talk about their PAC and what activities they are doing.

Allegan ISD-Robin was unable to be on the call due to conflict with regular PAC Meeting. They have partnered with Transition Council to do a parent fair on April 18, 2002 at the Michigan Career Technical Institute (MCTI in Plainwell). (Flyer was not received for regional distribution).

Kent ISD-Bob Wondergem was unable to be on call due to work conflict. He is hoping to get another PAC person to attend SPAC conference in August.

Kalamazoo RESA-We were happy to have Betty Dennis from the Kalamazoo PAC to join us on the call. She mentioned some of the issues they are facing. This year they lost half of their PAC and went from 16 to 8 members. PAC positions are filled by the service directors. KRESA PAC is divided into 3 service regions. They are picking PAC Award Winners at their next meeting scheduled for April 16th. She was unsure how awards were given in the North and South Regions of KRESA. Bob and Candy shared how we have been doing our PAC Awards and the overwhelming positive responses we have had. KRESA gave Betty an orientation notebook when she came on as PAC Chair after 2 years on the PAC. They are planning a Mock IEP Workshop for February 2003. Betty said the hardest challenge she has had has been delegating the work to PAC Members. People just don't want to do any more than they are already doing.

Barry County ISD-Linda related that she was seeing an increased number of people attending their PAC Meeting about 7 people are attending now. She mentioned that their ISD has a new Director of Special Education. She mentioned their Awards were met with mixed emotions because the recipients wanted to see the money spent on students instead. She mentioned one parental concern she had been called on where the child/family was automatically excluded from taking the MEAP and was not asked about whether their child would be participating or not. Linda has been chairperson for numerous years and her child is a junior in high school. She too is concerned about who will take over the PAC when her child exits special education. Likewise, she also sits on the ISD Board now.

St. Joseph ISD-Bob discussed some of the activities his PAC has done this year. They had a great turnout of 50 people at their meeting in March with Speaker Duncan Wyeth. The biggest problem they are having currently is recruiting membership. Bob still wants to know how to get new members into the PAC with younger children in school that buy into the mission of the PAC. His PAC has brochures; they have a postcard system whereby parents can fill out a postcard that is sent into the ISD and forwarded to PAC members who respond to them. He also sits on the Special Ed Finance Committee at his ISD. Bob is concerned about transition and the fact that he still sees a lack of effective transition plans for TMI populations and multiple/severe populations.

Van Buren ISD-Candy discussed some of the successful events her PAC has had due to collaboration with the Transition Council within her county. Candy had two transition events this year with about 70 people attending. Candy is looking at contacting a rural Center of Independent Living to come and do a presentation for the community partners and ISD in Van Buren County. Candy has also been asked to be on a new Transition committee for starting transition planning at an earlier age and writing a grant that goes with that.

Candy told them about planning for this years PAC Awards Ceremony and that she was able to delegate some of the work to other members to do. 45 nominations were received (4 were 2nd nominations).

2. Region 3 Minutes Approved

Minutes from October 2001 were approved. These will be posted to the Region 3 Webpage of the SPAC Website.

I went over the reason for having regional meetings, and that it is by networking together as PACs that we can help one another with problems and resources. One of the main problems expressed by all PACs present was the need for more parents to become involved in PACs. We discussed different ways of raising awareness of the PAC. Topics for future regional meetings include increasing membership and how to get members to commit.

3. SPAC Listserve and Website

Candy explained what the State PAC is doing to try to improve communication among PAC's around the state. She explained the SPAC website is available for anyone to browse

on the internet and can be found by going to: Michigan.gov and looking under Education. Once in the Education website you can pick Special Education. Under Special Education SPAC is listed under the quick links drop down box. I am posting approved minutes to this site as well as upcoming regional events. Anyone wanting to invite others to training being provided by your ISD for parents, please forward your information to me and I will have it posted to the Webpage.

The listserve is a method by which only PAC Chairpersons can share concerns by subscribing to the list that is furnished to the Department of Education Webmaster Frank Rowell through the regional representatives. Email addresses need to be provided to the regional representative for access to be gained to this list serve. Both of these items will be covered at the State PAC Conference in August in detail with Webmaster Frank Rowell.

4. Future Sites for Regional Meetings

Although every one who has attended a regional meeting agrees that there is value in meeting together to discuss PAC issues, we continue to have low attendance at the regional meetings. We will have a regional meeting at the conference in August.

Again due to lack of participation in the conference call, Candy sent a letter to the regional directors for region 3. One director did fax the information for their chairperson. Then the chairperson called me direct. **Welcome Suzan Knighton from Hillsdale County ISD.** Also Candy found out **Tina Densmore** replaced **Laura Wempa** as the Ionia PAC Chairperson. Again anyone with email please send your email addresses to me so that my communication with you may be improved and you will be able to receive information in a more timely fashion.

Robin Hodel of Allegan was going to check into having an October meeting at her ISD.

5. Upcoming Conferences

Candy mentioned the SPAC Presentation at CEC and that we were warmly received.

Candy also talked about the SPAC Conference that will be held at Boyne Highlands and that registration brochures will be mailed out by the end of April.

7. Open Forum

Again, members requested ideas on getting new families involved in PAC's and how to get them to commit to the PAC. The SPAC Executive Board was asked to look into this issue and try to offer suggestions to rural PAC's who are struggling to survive how to recruit parents to value PAC membership and to become actively involved.

Another issue discussed was transition plans and the concern that there is still a lack of effective transition planning for specific populations. (TMI, Severely/multiply impaired).

A third issue raised was progress of the Revised Rules and how that will really effect ISD's in the fall and what about the reauthorization of IDEA? An opinion was expressed that parents have become complacent and feel that they are able to get what they need from the schools for the most part, what will happen when this changes and waivers/deviations continue to be approved prior to review by PAC's? Hopefully this question will be addressed at the SPAC Conference.

Respectfully Submitted,

Candy Kniss
Region 3 Representative

Minutes Approved at Regional Meeting August 1, 2002 at Boyne Highlands.